



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

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News Release

MACOMB COUNTY MAN ARRAIGNED FOR COUNTERFEIT GOODS

More than 1,500 handbags were seized

DETROIT — A Chesterfield Township man was arraigned today on an indictment charging him with trafficking in counterfeit goods, following an investigation by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) special agents.

Marshall Cousens, 58, formerly doing business as MC Trading, 30494 23 Mile Rd., Chesterfield Township, Mich., was indicted on six counts by a federal grand jury in Detroit Nov. 1. This matter was initiated by the Chesterfield Township Police Department, which executed a search warrant at MC Trading Feb. 9 and seized various counterfeit goods.

ICE continued the investigation and filed a complaint charging that Cousens trafficked in counterfeit handbags offering for sale more than 1,500 handbags, purportedly manufactured by such designers as: Prada, Kate Spade, Coach, Louis Vuitton, Burberry and Gucci. In fact, the handbags were fakes bearing imitation trademarks that were virtually indistinguishable from those registered by the designers in the United States Patent and Trademark office. The retail price of the legitimate merchandise totals to \$2 million. Many of the profits generated by these counterfeit products end up in the hands of criminal organizations.

"These charges underscore the seriousness with which my office and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, as well as other local, state and federal law enforcement agencies, view allegations of trafficking in counterfeit merchandise," U.S. Attorney Murphy said. "It is especially important that now, as this region prepares to host Super Bowl XL, which has brought and will bring literally millions of dollars of trademarked and licensed merchandise into this area, that retailers and consumers alike recognize that the knowing sale of counterfeit merchandise is a crime which may result in the incarceration of the offenders."

“We pursue counterfeiters to protect the American consumer from inferior and unsafe products, and to ensure that the interests of legitimate trademark holders are addressed,” said Brian M. Moskowitz, special agent in charge of the ICE Detroit office. “On another level these types of cases are critically important because they help disrupt the flow of huge sums of illicit money into the underground economy where they can be used to support and fund other organized criminal activities. This case would not have been possible without the great work and collaboration of the officers of the Chesterfield Township Police Department.”

If convicted in this case, Cousens faces a maximum possible penalty of 10 years imprisonment and a fine of \$2 million per count.

An indictment is only a charge and is not evidence of guilt. A defendant is entitled to a fair trial in which it will be the government's burden to prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

Chesterfield Township Police Department assisted with the investigation. Craig Weier, Assistant U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Michigan, is prosecuting this case.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of four integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.